

§ 31.3401(e)-1

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for which he is still receiving wages from such person is an *employer*.

(c) An employer may be an individual, a corporation, a partnership, a trust, an estate, a joint-stock company, an association, or a syndicate, group, pool, joint venture, or other unincorporated organization, group or entity. A trust or estate, rather than the fiduciary acting for or on behalf of the trust or estate, is generally the employer.

(d) The term *employer* embraces not only individuals and organizations engaged in trade or business, but organizations exempt from income tax, such as religious and charitable organizations, educational institutions, clubs, social organizations and societies, as well as the governments of the United States, the States, Territories, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia, including their agencies, instrumentalities, and political subdivisions.

(e) The term *employer* also means (except for the purpose of the definition of *wages*) any person paying wages on behalf of a nonresident alien individual, foreign partnership, or foreign corporation, not engaged in trade or business within the United States (including Puerto Rico as if a part of the United States).

(f) If the person for whom the services are or were performed does not have legal control of the payment of the wages for such services, the term *employer* means (except for the purpose of the definition of *wages*) the person having such control. For example, where wages, such as certain types of pensions or retired pay, are paid by a trust and the person for whom the services were performed has no legal control over the payment of such wages, the trust is the *employer*.

(g) The term *employer* also means a person making a payment of a supplemental unemployment compensation benefit which is treated under paragraph (b)(14) of § 31.3401(a)-1 as if it were wages. For example, if supplemental unemployment compensation benefits are paid from a trust which was created under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement, the trust shall generally be deemed to be the employer. However, if the person making such payment is acting solely as an

agent for another person, the term *employer* shall mean such other person and not the person actually making the payment.

(h) It is a basic purpose to centralize in the employer the responsibility for withholding, returning, and paying the tax, and for furnishing the statements required under section 6051 and § 31.6051-1. The special definitions of the term *employer* in paragraphs (e), (f), and (g) of this section are designed solely to meet special or unusual situations. They are not intended as a departure from the basic purpose.

[T.D. 6516, 25 FR 13096, Dec. 20, 1960, as amended by T.D. 7068, 35 FR 17329, Nov. 11, 1970]

§ 31.3401(e)-1 Number of withholding exemptions claimed.

(a) The term *number of withholding exemptions claimed* means the number of withholding exemptions claimed in a withholding exemption certificate in effect under section 3402(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or in effect under section 1622(h) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1939. If no such certificate is in effect, the number of withholding exemptions claimed shall be considered to be zero. The number of withholding exemptions claimed must be taken into account in determining the amount of tax to be deducted and withheld under section 3402, whether the employer computes the tax in accordance with the provisions of subsection (a) or subsection (c) of section 3402.

(b) The employer is not required to ascertain whether or not the number of withholding exemptions claimed is greater than the number of withholding exemptions to which the employee is entitled. For rules relating to invalid withholding exemption certificates, see § 31.3402(f)(2)-1(e), and for rules relating to required submission of copies of certain withholding exemption certificates to the Internal Revenue Service, see § 31.3402(f)(2)-1(g).

(c) As to the number of withholding exemptions to which an employee is entitled, see § 31.3402(f)(1)-1.

[T.D. 6516, 25 FR 13032, Dec. 20, 1960, as amended by T.D. 7423, 41 FR 26217, June 23, 1976; T.D. 7682, 45 FR 15526, Mar. 11, 1980; T.D. 7803, 47 FR 3547, Jan. 26, 1982]